

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 02278 190803Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2938

S E C R E T HELSINKI 2278

EXDIS

FOR AF ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, PCAT, UR, US

SUBJECT: CAT - POST-ROUND CONSULTATIONS WITH AFRICAN STATES

REF: STATE 178349

1. IN THE EVENT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IS MADE WITH THE SOVIETS ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT CRITERIA, WE WILL ADDRESS WITH THEM THE QUESTION OF CONTACTING AFRICAN STATES IN ORDER TO PROMOTE AFRICAN RESTRAINT INITIATIVES. THE SPECIFIC ISSUE BEFORE US IS HOW TO PROPOSE THIS BE DONE. OPTIONS BEING CONSIDERED ARE: (1) JOINT US/SOVIET APPROACHES, (2) PARALLEL DEMARCHES (A) IN ALL SUB-SAHARAN STATES (B) EACH TO ITS OWN CLIENTS/RECIPIENTS.
2. EACH OF THE OPTIONS HAS ITS DRAW BACKS FOR US. BELIEVE WE SHOULD RULE OUT OPTION 2(B) AS THERE ARE TOO MANY AFRICAN STATES THAT ARE EITHER JOINT CLIENTS OR IN WHICH WE NOR THE SOVIETS HAVE AN ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP.
3. THE JOINT APPROACH HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF ALLOWING US TO KNOW THAT THE PRINCIPALS AGREED TO HERE IN HELSINKI

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ARE BEING PRESENTED IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING. THESE COULD BE FOLLOWED UP WITH UNILATERAL DEMARCHES WHERE WE FELT IT NECESSARY. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SPECIFIC CASES WHERE A JOINT APPROACH COULD BE MISREAD BY AFRICAN GOVERNMENT (IE, SOMALIA).

4. PARALLEL APPROACHES IN ALL CAPITALS IS PROBABLY

THE MOST CAUTIOUS PATTERN TO FOLLOW AS WE (AND PRE-SUMABLY THE RUSSIANS) WOULD BE FREER TO TAILOR THE DEMARCHES TO THE LOCAL SITUATION AND TO THE US BILATERAL CONCERNS. IT IS THIS LAST OPTION THAT THE AF REP PLANS TO SUPPORT.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE BUREAU MAY WISH TO OFFER.

RIDGWAY

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NNN

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